

REGULAR MEETING – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2008
PLAZA CONFERENCE ROOM AT CITY HALL – 500 CASTRO STREET
6:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:29 p.m. by Chair Siegel.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee Members: Margaret Abe-Koga, Ronit Bryant and Chair Jac Siegel.

City Staff Present: Cathy Lazarus, Public Works Director; Joan Jenkins, Transportation and Policy Manager; and Steve Attinger, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Peter Holoyda of Renewable First, a nonprofit group established to engage cities in pilot programs for zero-emission vehicles. They develop renewable energy sources to power the vehicles, such as:

- A five-city program in Southern California established by the Air Quality Management District.
- Making plug-in hybrid kits available.
- Developing a San Jose program with plug-in capability at lampposts.

He asked that the City work together with surrounding cities to help develop standards. CESC may request a return visit to hear a full presentation.

Bruce Karney—New awards to be announced soon recognizing Mountain View for the most solar installations in 2007 (among mid-size cities). Among all California cities last year, the No. 1 city was San Jose, No. 2—San Diego and No. 3—Mountain View.

Questions from Committee:

Question: Who is giving awards?

Answer: Mr. Karney—NorCal Solar, a consortium of solar companies from nine Bay Area counties. The awards recognize good practices within city building departments, encourage low permit fees and fast approval.

Question: At one time City had largest PV system in the country. Who holds that distinction now?

Answer: Mr. Karney—There are many large Federal systems throughout the country. In Silicon Valley, AMD's solar system is largest at about twice the size of Google's.

4. MINUTES APPROVAL

Motion—M/S Bryant/Abe-Koga—Carried 3-0—Approve the minutes of the October 23, 2008 meeting as submitted.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Public Works Director presented the staff report, stating that the challenge for the Committee is to develop a prioritized approach that will make forward motion to implement the Task Force recommendations consistent with available resources. Staff identified three departments tasked with the responsibility for implementation due to their specialized expertise: Public Works, Community Development and Community Services (Parks and Recreation Divisions).

Staff preliminarily sorted the recommendations by department. Some recommendations are already being implemented; some "nest" into the General Plan revision process; some are infeasible due to statutory requirements; and some recommendations are not traditionally under the jurisdiction of the City.

Several recommendations are listed under the purview of AB 811. This bill is similar to the Berkeley model, which allows a jurisdiction to create a city-wide assessment district to finance energy efficiency improvements on homes and businesses at the owner's discretion. This approach may accomplish a number of the Task Force recommendations pertaining to incentivizing

people to make improvements to their property. Staff is preparing a "white paper" so the Committee can make decisions in that regard.

Passage of AB 2466, sponsored by the City of San Jose, allows a city to generate up to 1 megawatt of power and use it to offset city government energy accounts. This approach might be an efficient way to generate and use alternative energy. Staff will prepare a briefing on this subject as well.

Committee: Are items mentioned in the General Plan visioning meetings captured here?

Staff: Not all of them; however, some items will be added to list. The General Plan consultant will integrate climate change actions into the General Plan.

Public Comment

Approximately 12 members of the Environmental Sustainability Task Force were present and commented on staff's analysis of several Task Force recommendations.

Bruce Karney: AB 2466 allows the City to put solar panels wherever the sun is best and offset power costs for City facilities; thumbs up on AB 2466. Concerning AB 811, Mr. Karney has serious concerns about the impact of Berkeley model on tax credits that a homeowner can get. The property tax imposed by the Berkeley model will not be tax-deductible. The Task Force chose not to include these programs in the recommendations.

A speaker objected to the categories "may not be feasible" and "outside City purview." Virtually everything is feasible but may not be desirable. The category "outside City purview" is purely a judgment call.

Bruce England: The Whisman area could possibly be a "healthy village." Palo Alto is seriously considering banning single-use bags. Lastly, can we make sure that the City is properly represented on the County committees and commissions?

Staff: The City is working with the Recycling and Waste Reduction Commission and the County on single-use bag ban/fee model ordinance. Palo Alto also participates in the County work.

Shirley Ingalls: Synchronizing City traffic signals is complete on Shoreline Boulevard but not complete on Grant Road.

Staff: Grant Road was previously synchronized. The grant for Grant Road is to update the system.

Speaker: Recommendation to "provide energy audits" is listed as "may not be feasible," but this work is done by a nonprofit organization in Palo Alto (Acterra).

Cynthia Kapphahn: "Restore Mountain View's natural waterways and wetlands" is listed as "may not be feasible," yet there has already been work done in this area. It may be more appropriate to classify as "in progress." Speaker also asked that the City relook at "preserve and restore natural habitats" because there is work in progress and has the potential to engage everyone in the community. Lastly, speaker wants to know how "reduce and contain invasive species" was categorized as "may not be feasible"? There are many actions that can be done.

Staff: Creek restoration is the jurisdiction of the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD), which actually owns the creek. The City works on trails, but SCVWD is responsible for creek restoration.

Cliff Chambers: He disagrees with category "outside City purview" since, in many cases, an interrelationship exists between recommendations. For instance, "healthy village," "adopt pedestrian master plan" and "alternate transportation for children" should be treated as a package of recommendations. It becomes problematic when you take some of the recommendations in isolation.

Another Task Force member: There are two areas that leave the largest carbon footprint. Transportation is 50 percent; next largest is house heating and water heating.

Mark Gilkey: States he realize not all of recommendations can be done cheaply or quickly but also realizes items left unaddressed will grow exponentially, thereby defeating advances made on other items. We should actively push items seen as "outside City purview" to a level of government where something can be done; otherwise, the system does not become sustainable.

Julie Lovins: In these difficult economic times, she suggests using the considerable talents of the unemployed.

The public input period was closed.

Committee Discussion

We should manage expectations. This Committee will try to implement as much as possible, as fast as possible. The Committee does not have many resources (\$29,000 budget to end of this fiscal year), but there are many recommendations that do not require much money. The Assembly bills are key because they offer quick action (PV solar, windows, etc), especially AB 811, where the City can get funds from a bond measure. We should first implement the items that do not take much money.

City staff created, and Council approved, an algorithm for cost-benefit analysis. Let us use this evaluation template to determine cost-benefit, then we will take it to Council with a solid analysis; action will soon follow. Accuracy is not what is important in the analysis—use the best assumptions you have and go with it.

Public Works Director: Emission goals will be our baseline measurement. We need to set a policy foundation because we have not framed a City sustainability policy yet.

Councilmember comment: Setting the goals and setting a zero waste policy are high on my list.

Public Works Director: There may be a way to harness community volunteers as a resource to the City in putting together all the information on a web site. Before we start doing this, many items will require some level of development before we can start eliminating, adding and prioritizing items.

Councilmember comment: We should have by end of year a community task force with members identified. We need a web site to disseminate information, a display in the Library and elsewhere with a packet of information about water-saving, green landscaping, energy audit, etc. Let us collect all the information that has been developed and put it into one box. Perhaps some volunteers can work on the web site.

Councilmember comment: One-time usage bags are very important, but we need to get the public's attention. Let us run a template on the one-use bags issue.

Councilmember comment: RWRC has taken on single-use bags, so she feels it is not appropriate for us to bring in algorithms to prove things that are already known/accepted. Do not need to look at the legality of an ordinance

prohibiting use because there are many things the City can do on a voluntary basis.

Councilmember comment: The single-use bag issue as a way to get the public's attention. Suggests starting a competitive program among the neighborhood associations.

Public Works Director: We would have to go to the implementing department and have them provide preliminary information to determine feasibility on any of the items we have discussed. Staff will come back with that information.

Next meeting: City staff to send e-mail with possible dates.

Potential Topics for Future Discussion

The Committee would like to discuss how to encourage the public to participate and get involved in sustainability actions.

6. **COMMITTEE/STAFF COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND REPORTS—None.**
7. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

JJ/8/PWK
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